Applicant : Aurobinda Pradhan   Attorney's Docket No.: 15609-044001 / 2003P00966
Serial No. : 10/821,073   US
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REMARKS

The independent claims 1, 11 and 14 have been amended. As such, claims 1-20 remain pending. Favorable consideration of the claims as amended is respectfully requested.

The independent claims have been amended to recite that the intrinsic association is one among several intrinsic associations. Moreover, for the user-selectable command that identifies that intrinsic association, the claims now recite that the identification is done by indicating which of the selected electronic document and the other electronic document is a follow up of the other. These amendments are supported by the present disclosure, for example in the description of Figures 1A-D on page 4, line 11 to page 7, line 24 of the specification (hereafter referred to as 4:11—7:24). There, it is described that the opportunity record 120 (shown in Figure 1A) is a follow-up document to the activity record 180 (shown in Figure 1C). 6:16-18. Accordingly, the user-selectable command 170 indicates this intrinsic association. 6:8-22. Thus, one type of intrinsic association is that the current document is a follow up of another document. Moreover, the user-selectable command 195 (Figure 1D) indicates that the activity record 180 has the opportunity record 120 as a follow-up document. 7:11-18. Thus, another type of intrinsic association is that another document is a follow up of the current document. Accordingly, there is support for the amendment regarding several intrinsic associations. Moreover, the user-selectable commands 170 and 195 identify the respective association by indicating which of the documents is a follow up of the other, which supports the remainder of the amendment language. No new matter is added.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 7-10, 12-15 and 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. 6,313,855 (Shuping). Claims 3, 11 and 16 were rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shuping in view of U.S. 6,489,995 ("Patil"). Claims 4, 5 and 17 were rejected under § 103(a) as unpatentable over Shuping, Patil and further view of U.S. 5,895,470 ("Pirolli"). These rejected are rendered moot by the amendments of the claims. Nevertheless, Applicant will point out differences between the present subject matter and the references.

Claim 1, as amended, is a method to be performed in a computer system having stored therein an electronic document that is associated with another electronic document. The method

comprises displaying a view of a selected electronic document on a graphical user interface. The selected electronic document has one of several intrinsic associations with at least one other electronic document. The method further comprises displaying a user-selectable command on the graphical user interface while displaying the view of the selected electronic document. The user-selectable command identifies the intrinsic association by indicating which of the selected electronic document and the other electronic document is a follow up of the other. The user-selectable command further causes a view of the other electronic document that is intrinsically associated with the selected electronic document to be displayed on the graphical user interface.

Shuping, in contrast, teaches the presentation of a three-sided panel, where the middle panel shows a current web page, the left panel shows pages linking to that web page, and the right panel shows web pages linked to by the current page. The Office Action notes that Shuping does not expressly teach that the user-selectable command is displayed. The Office Action states, however, that a "backward" navigation button could have been included in the browser taught by Shuping. But even if Shuping were modified in this way, there would be no disclosure or suggestion of more than one intrinsic association, or that the user-selectable command should identify the intrinsic association by indicating which of the electronic documents is a follow-up of the other.

Particularly, the documents in Shuping are associated by hyperlinks, so that from one page the user can navigate (forward) to another page. But Shuping does not disclose or suggest that there should be more than one kind of association between the documents (e.g., that a document is a follow up of another, or that a document has a follow-up document). This is because from a document a hyperlink can presumably be created to any other one of the documents. Shuping does not teach the concept that one document is a follow-up of another. Moreover, a "backward" button does not indicate which of these several associations exists between the documents at issue. Thus, Shuping fails to disclose at least the feature of the present claims that several intrinsic associations exist and that the user-selectable command identifies the intrinsic association by indicating which of the documents is a follow-up of the other.

The claims as amended are also not rendered obvious by Shuping. In the present subject matter, the user can see, based on the displayed user-selectable control, the intrinsic association(s) available for navigation. For example, the user-selectable command can answer

the user's questions: "What does the present document follow up on?" and "What follow-ups does the present document have?" Shuping does not provide this aid to the user in navigating the documents. Accordingly, the present independent claims are patentable over Shuping. The dependent claims include the features mentioned above, and further recite additional patentable features. They therefore distinguish over the prior art of record for these reasons.

Patil was cited as disclosing backward and forward buttons for showing past and future pages. Pirolli was cited as teaching a system that obtains topology and usage information for documents in order to classify/categorize. Patil and Pirolli, alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the claim features missing from Shuping per the above.

Applicant also notes some inconsistencies in the Office Action. The rejections of dependent claims 6-8 were based solely on the Shuping reference. Office Action page 2. For other dependent claims, however, including dependent claim 4, the rejections were based on the combination of Shuping, Patil and Pirolli. Office Action page 7. But the dependent claims 6-8 depend from the dependent claim 4 and thus include its subject matter. The situation is analogous with regard to the rejections of dependent claims 18-20, which failed to take into account the subject matter of dependent claims 16-17, from which these claims depend.
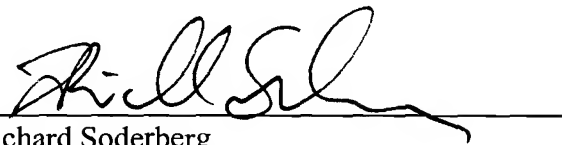
Favorable consideration of the claims as amended is respectfully requested.

Please apply the required fee of $790 for the RCE and any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 12/5/06

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